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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

FIELD MEMORANDUM SCS - 1102

Re: Qualification Standards

June 15, 1944

TO ALL RANKING FIELD OFFICERS:

Attached to this memorandum are copies of an outline of the minimum qualifications for the various grades in the soil conservationist and specialist series of positions in the Soil Conservation Service. This outline, after many months of study throughout the Service, has been approved as Service-wide policy. It is to be incorporated into the Personnel Procedures Handbook and, in addition, should be brought to the attention of all officers and employees within each region.

The Department Office of Personnel has wholeheartedly endorsed this initial attempt at establishing minimum qualification standards for positions in this Service. The Civil Service Commission reserved the right, of course, to pass on the qualification standards for appointment from outside the Service in individual cases and as requests for the announcement of civil service examinations are submitted.

The qualifications shown in the attached outline are minimum qualifications only, not average. They represent the minimum below which we do not feel we can go without seriously impairing the high technical quality of our program, and below which the Service will not go except in very unusual and specific circumstances warranting deviation from general policy. Any requests for deviation from this policy will be referred, as heretofore to the Washington Personnel office for prior approval.

In the forthcoming months, these qualification standards will be supplemented by a comparable statement for each grade and series of the personal qualifications required not attached to years of experience and amount or kind of education. These personal qualifications will include such qualification factors as ability to supervise, ability to meet and work with the public, initiative ability, qualities of leadership and the like. Additional statements will be issued covering the qualification standards for other groups of positions, such as CAF personnel, so that in due course all types of positions throughout the Service will have an established place in a Service-wide promotion network.

W. B. Bennett

Chief

Attachment

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

POSITION QUALIFICATIONS

1. Farm background is defined as meaning familiarity with farming acquired by residence on a farm, by seasonal periods of work on a farm, by being born and reared on a farm, and the like, but does not necessarily mean ownership or operation of a farm.
2. Farming experience includes general farming as an owner-operator, tenant, or farm hand, and should include the full variety of ordinary farming operations.
3. Ranch background means familiarity with beef, cattle and sheep production on a livestock ranch or in connection with a general type of farm.
4. The qualifications shown are minimum, not average, or even preferred qualifications. They are minima below which (if adopted) the Service will not go except under very unusual and special circumstances warranting deviation from general policy.
5. Required experience outside the Service in professional grades is consistently listed as a year longer than inside the Service to compensate for the fact that ordinarily it takes about a year for a new man to become properly oriented and adjusted to Service work.
6. The examinations required for promotion from SP to P grades are designed to discover how much a candidate understands of the principles behind the methods or practices with which he has been dealing as a subprofessional worker.

Minimum Qualifications for Aids

Field	Education	Experience
SP-3 Conservation aid	1. Graduation from high school	1. a. Farm background, <u>or</u> b. 3 months' experience in surveying, terracing, grading, road maintenance, or the handling of scrapers, bulldozers, excavators and other similar types of equipment and machinery
	2. 3 years of high school	2. a. 1 year's farming experience, <u>or</u> b. 6 months' experience as in 1(b)
	3. 2 years of high school	3. a. 2 years' farming experience, <u>or</u> b. 1 year's experience as in 1(b)
	4. 1 year of high school	4. a. 3 years' farming experience, <u>or</u> b. 18 months' experience as in 1(b)
	5. Graduation from grammar school	5. a. 4 years' farming experience, <u>or</u> b. 2 years' experience as in 1(b)
SP-5 Conservation aid	1.	1. 6 months' experience as an SP-3 conservation aid
	2. Graduation from high school	2. a. 2 years' farming experience, <u>or</u> b. 1 year of experience as in 1(b) of SP-3, and farm background
	3. 3 years of high school	3. a. 2 years' farming experience, <u>or</u> b. 1 year's experience as in 1(b) of SP-3, farm background, plus c. 120 days satisfactory employment on a temporary basis as SP-5 conservation aid

Minimum Qualifications for Aids (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
SP-5 Engineering aid	1.	1. 6 months' experience as an SP-3 conservation aid with primary duties in engineering work
	2. Graduation from high school	2. 1 year of experience in subprofessional engineering work
	3. 3 years of high school	3. 2 years' experience in subprofessional engineering work
SP-5 Soils aid	1.	1. 6 months' experience as an SP-3 conservation aid
	2. Graduation from high school	2. 2 years' farming experience <u>or</u> farm background and 1 year's experience in surveying, drafting, soils laboratory work or the like
SP-6 Conservation aid	1.	1. 2 years' experience as SP-5 conservation aid, engineering aid, or soils aid.
	2. Graduation from high school (College work may be substituted for experience, year for year)	2. 6 years' farming or agricultural experience of which at least 3 years were devoted to conservation farming, either on a farm under agreement with the Soil Conservation Service or a district. (Conservation farming on a farm owned by candidate and checked by a Service representative is satisfactory)
SP-6 Engineering aid	1.	1. 2 years' experience as SP-5 engineering aid
	2. Graduation from high school (College work may be substituted for experience, year for year)	2. 6 years' experience in subprofessional engineering work

Minimum Qualifications for P-1 Grade

Field	Education	Experience
Agronomy	1. Bachelor's degree in agriculture, a major in farm crops or soils, and a minor in range, botany, conservation, education, journalism, dairy or animal husbandry, or agricultural engineering	1. Farm background required
Biology	1. Bachelor's degree in a biological field with emphasis on ecology or related sciences	1. Farm background desirable
Botany	1. Bachelor's degree with a major in botany	1. Farm background desirable
Engineering	1. Bachelor's degree in civil, mechanical, or agricultural engineering 2.	1. Farm background desirable 2. 3 years' experience as an SP-5 engineering aid, including satisfactory completion of a technical examination and 4 months' detail to P-1 engineering work
Forestry	1. Bachelor's degree in forestry	1. Farm background desirable
Horticulture	1. Bachelor's degree with a major in horticulture	1. Farm background desirable
Range	1. Bachelor's degree in an agriculture science, including 5 semester hours in plant science, 3 hours of which is plant physiology or plant ecology, 5 semester hours in animal husbandry	1. Ranch background desirable

Minimum Qualifications for P-1 Grade (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
Soils	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bachelor's degree, with at least one fundamental general course in soils, or college graduation with a major in geology 2. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Farm background desirable 2. 3 years' experience as an SP-5 soils aid including satisfactory completion of a technical examination and 4 months' detail to P-1 soils survey work
Soil conservationist	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. Bachelor's degree in agriculture, agricultural education, agricultural engineering, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, agronomy, animal husbandry, biology, botany, dairy husbandry, forestry, geography, geology, horticulture, range management, soils, soil conservation, agricultural economics, or zoology 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1 year's experience as an SP-6 conservation or engineering aid including satisfactory completion of a technical examination and 4 months' successful detail to P-1 work 2. 3 years' experience as an SP-5 conservation aid, soils aid, or engineering aid, including satisfactory completion of a technical examination and 4 months' successful detail to P-1 work 3. Farm or ranch background required

Minimum Qualifications for P-2 Grade

Field	Education	Experience
Agrohomy	1. Same as P-1	1. 18 months' service as a P-1 agronomist or soil conservationist in the Soil Conservation Service
	2. Same as P-1 (1 year advanced college training in agronomy may be substituted for 1 year of experience)	2. 2 years' experience of professional caliber as an agronomist at an experiment station, or as an extension agronomist, county agent, vocational agricultural teacher of agronomy, or similar experience
Biology	1. Same as P-1	1. 18 months' service as biologist or soil conservationist in the Soil Conservation Service
	2. Same as P-1 (1 year advanced college training in biology may be substituted for 1 year of experience)	2. 2 years of professional experience in biology or agricultural sciences outside the Service
Engineering	1. Same as P-1	1. 18 months' experience as a P-1 engineer in the Soil Conservation Service
	2. Same as P-1 (1 year advanced college training in engineering may be substituted for 1 year of experience)	2. 2 years' engineering work of professional caliber
	3.	3. 2½ years' experience as an SP-6 engineering aid in the Soil Conservation Service including satisfactory completion of a technical examination and 4 months' successful detail to P-2 work

Minimum Qualifications for P-2 grade (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
Forestry	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as P-1 2. Same as P-1 (1 year advanced college training in forestry may be substituted for 1 year experience) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 18 months' as a forester or soil conservationist in the Soil Conservation Service 2. 2 years' of professional experience in forestry
Range	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as P-1 2. Same as P-1 (1 year advanced college training in range management may be substituted for 1 year of experience) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 18 months' experience as range conservationist, or soil conservationist in the Soil Conservation Service primarily employed on technical range work 2. 2 years' professional experience in the field of range management outside the Soil Conservation Service
Soils	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as P-1 2. Same as P-1 (1 year of advanced college training in soils or geology may be substituted for 1 year of experience) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 18 months' experience as a P-1 soil scientist 2. 2 years' professional experience in soil survey work or 3 years in a closely allied scientific field
Soil conservationist	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Same as P-1 2. 3. Same as P-1 (1 year of advanced college training in an agricultural science may be substituted for one year of experience) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 18 months' experience as a P-1 soil conservationist or specialist in the Soil Conservation Service 2. 2½ years' experience as SP-6 conservation aid including satisfactory completion of a technical examination and 4 months' successful detail to P-2 work 3. 2 years' experience of professional caliber as county agent or assistant county agent, in vocational agriculture, or in comparable agriculture work

Minimum Qualifications for P-3 Grade

Field	Education	Experience
Agronomy	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 agronomist or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in agronomy may be substituted for experience, year for year up to 2 years)	2. 4 years' progressively more responsible professional experience as an agronomist at an experiment station, in teaching agronomy, as a county agent, as a vocational agricultural teacher, or in comparable work
Biology	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 biologist or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in biology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 2 years)	2. 4 years progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of biology
Engineering	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 engineer or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in engineering may be substituted year for year for experience up to 2 years)	2. 4 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the engineering field
Forestry	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 forester or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in forestry may be substituted year for year for experience up to 2 years)	2. 4 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the forestry field
Range	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 range conservationist or soil conservationist primarily employed on technical range work
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in range management may be substituted year for year for experience up to 2 years)	2. 4 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of range management outside the Soil Conservation Service

Minimum Qualifications for P-3 Grade (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
Soils	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 soil scientist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in soils or geology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 2 years)	2. 4 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in soils work, or in a closely allied field
Soil conservationist	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-2 soil conservationist or specialist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in an agricultural science may be substituted year for year for experience up to 2 years)	2. 4 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in agricultural work

Minimum Qualifications for P-4 Grade

Field	Education	Experience
Agronomy	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 agronomist or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in agronomy may be substituted for experience, year for year up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of agronomy as outlined under P-3
Biology	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 biologist or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in biology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of biology
Engineering	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 engineer or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in engineering may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of engineering
Forestry	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 forester or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in forestry may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of forestry
Range	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 range conservationist or soil conservationist in the Soil Conservation Service
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in range management may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of range management outside the Soil Conservation Service

Minimum Qualifications for P-4 Grade (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
Soils	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 soil scientist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in soils or geology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in soils work, or in a closely allied field
Soil conservationist	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-3 soil conservationist or specialist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in an agricultural science may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 6 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in agricultural work

Minimum Qualifications for P-5 Grade

Field	Education	Experience
Agronomy	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 agronomist or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in agronomy may be substituted for experience, year for year up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of agronomy as outlined under P-3
Biology	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 biologist or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in biology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of biology
Engineering	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 engineer or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in engineering may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of engineering
Forestry	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 forester or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in forestry may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of forestry
Range	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 range technician or soil conservationist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in range management may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of range management

Minimum Qualifications for P-5 Grade (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
Soils	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 soil scientist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in soils or geology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in soils work, or in a closely allied field
Soil conservationist	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-4 soil conservationist or specialist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in an agricultural science may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 8 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in agricultural work

Minimum Qualifications for P-6 Grade

Field	Education	Experience
Agronomy	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Same as P-12. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in agronomy may be substituted for experience, year for year up to 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2 years' experience as a P-5 agronomist or soil conservationist2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of agronomy as outlined under P-3
Biology	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Same as P-12. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in biology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2 years' experience as a P-5 biologist or soil conservationist2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of biology
Engineering	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Same as P-12. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in engineering may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2 years' experience as a P-5 engineer or soil conservationist2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of engineering
Forestry	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Same as P-12. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in forestry may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2 years' experience as a P-5 forester or soil conservationist2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of forestry
Range	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Same as P-12. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in range management may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 2 years' experience as a P-5 range technician or soil conservationist2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in the field of range management

Minimum Qualifications for P-6 Grade (continued)

Field	Education	Experience
Soils	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as a P-5 soil scientist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in soils or geology may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in soils work, or in a closely allied field
Soil conservationist	1. Same as P-1	1. 2 years' experience as P-5 soil conservationist or specialist
	2. Same as P-1 (advanced college training in an agricultural science may be substituted year for year for experience up to 3 years)	2. 10 years' progressively more responsible professional experience in agricultural work

